New Hire Dies Under Bulldozer

A dump truck spotter working for a North Carolina utility construction company was run over by a bulldozer.

The 56-year-old victim had attended a “Newly Hired Experienced Miner Trainer Course”. Training included instruction on the recognition and avoidance of mobile equipment hazards.

On Aug. 13, 2005, the victim was run over by a bulldozer while “spotting” for a driver in another vehicle. The company owner was backing the bulldozer and did not see him. A co-worker yelled a warning, but neither the bulldozer operator nor the victim heard. The bulldozer rolled over the victim’s legs and torso. The co-worker ran and told the bulldozer operator what had occurred. The company owner saw the victim lying on the ground and called 911. Emergency medical services (EMS) personnel arrived approximately two minutes later and found no signs of life. The county coroner pronounced the victim dead at the site.

This was the employer’s first fatality. The owner was qualified to operate the bulldozer, and the victim had performed spotting work under the same conditions before.

Following the investigation, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health recommended that workers should:

- *Maintain safe clearance from equipment.*
- *Operate equipment in accordance with safety guidelines.*
- *Conduct pre-work safety meetings to communicate hazards.*
- *Wear PPE, including high-visibility clothing.*

Heavy equipment manufacturers should also consider incorporating collision avoidance technology into all new machines.

Source: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) Program, Case Report 2005-11